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ABSTRACT

Occasioned by the 1969 Galaxy Conference on Adult Education, this position paper denounces what is seen as the failure of national organizations, colleges and universities, and Federal, state, and local agencies to provide for and actively encourage the involvement of members of ethnic minorities in adult education programs at decision making levels. Corrective measures in professional hiring, training, program planning, and curriculum development are recommended. (ly)

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POSITION PAPER

December 9, 1969

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACK ADULT EDUCATORS

Many of the black adult educators in attendance at the 1969 Galaxy Conference on Adult Education find many aspects of the various associations disturbing:

1. The apparent exclusion of representative ethnic groups in planning the national meetings.
2. The absence of reasonable representation of ethnic minorities as officers and members of executive committees of the various associations.

Likewise, we find the employment patterns of State colleges and universities, and at State and local levels to be apparently racist.

1. There is an apparent systematic exclusion, except for tokenism, of members of ethnic minorities from such positions as state directors of adult basic education, supervisors and curriculum development.
2. Except for occasional examples of tokenism, there is an apparent systematic exclusion of members of ethnic minorities from such college and university positions as deans of extension, deans of continuing education, directors of continuing education, directors of community service, directors of community development, directors of conferences and institutes, and professors of continuing education.
3. There is an absence of representative numbers of ethnic minorities from such positions at the county and city levels as directors and supervisors of adult education.

It is our view that the failure of national organization, colleges, and universities, federal, state and local agencies to provide for and actively encourage the involvement of members of ethnic minorities in adult education programs, at decision making levels, might be one of the major causes of urban unrest, including the increasing polorization of the races.

We believe that this hideous system of exclusion, which hinders leadership development reduces community self-pride and kills inspiration for the thousands of minority persons who do not see the success patterns of America in other minority persons, is a major cause of umemployment among the poor, and a major contributor to the increasing illiteracy among the poor.

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Accordingly, it is our considered judgement that the national professional adult education associations, as currently constituted, do not represent the interests of ethnic minorities, both blacks and browns alike, as evidenced by their apparent continued systematic exclusion as officials of these organizations, members of executive committees, nomination committees, and other decision making capacities, except for tokenism.

Likewise, except in special isolated cases, the paid professional staffs of these national organizations have systematically excluded ethnic minorities, except on special projects.

We have concluded as long as the major professional adult education organizations continue their apparently racism policies, whether innocently or by design, a new organization of adult educators is necessary to provide a forum for ethnic minorities to plan strategies for effecting meaningful education and training systems for members of these minorities at the professional and basic levels.

It is our wish that this new organization work cooperating with the existing national adult education organizations, state and local organizations and institutions in helping to establish national, state and local priorities, and the development of relevant programs.

We, therefore, call on all of the adult education associations, and federal, state, and local agencies to work with us in helping to vigorously promote the following goals:

1. More meaningful involvement of blacks in the activities of the major professional organization as evidenced by:
    - 1-1. The nomination and election of more than a single black to national offices in each organization.
    - 1-2. The nomination of more than one black to committees of the various organizations.
    - 1-3. The employment of blacks as professionals on the staff of the national offices.
2. The deliberate employment of qualified blacks as state directors of adult basic education.
3. The deliberate employment of other qualified blacks in professional positions in adult education at the state level.
4. The employment of blacks as county and city directors and supervisors of adult education programs.

5. The employment of blacks at colleges and universities as professionals in the following positions:
    - 5-1. Deans and directors of extension
    - 5-2. Deans and directors of continuing education
    - 5-3. Directors of Community Services
    - 5-4. Directors of Conferences and Institutes
    - 5-5. Professors of Continuing Education
6. The design of relevant training programs for teachers and administrators with emphasis upon continuing advancement opportunity.
7. The design of quality ethnic oriented curriculum materials.
8. The development of special ethnic oriented programs designed specifically to reduce racial tensions.
9. The development of special ethnic oriented material designed to promote legal justice.
10. The development of special ethnic oriented material designed to promote social and economic awareness.

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